

The

# Alcester Grammar



M.D.C.



# School Record

July, 1939

# Alcester Grammar School Record.

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No. 63.

JULY, 1939.

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EDITOR—MR. V. V. DRULLER.

COMMITTEE—

P. HORSEMAN, M. AUSTIN, HUNT i, BIDDLE.

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## Editorial.

Reference was made in our last issue to the work on the new block of buildings, which are taking the place of the old huts. This term considerable progress has been made, and, externally, the work is nearing completion, for the buildings have their roof and are connected to the main school by a covered way which is an extension of the corridor. The interior fittings and decoration are receiving steady attention and it is hoped that two of the new rooms will be available for the examinations at the end of term, thus providing some relief from the conditions of crowding under which we have been forced to work recently.

In no part of the school, indeed, have working conditions at all approached the ideal. Cement crushers and mixers have combined with hammerings to make an almost intolerable din outside, while in the main school sundry noises both above and below ground have conspired to disturb our peace. The demolition of the boiler house chimney and the erection of a new and larger one have not taken place without a great deal of disturbance. All of us are now eagerly anticipating the departure of the workmen and the occupation of the new rooms in the autumn.

Despite the upset caused by building operations, however, all activities, both of work and play, have been carried through as usual, and what is ordinarily a busy term has been no less busy. Classes have suffered little actual interruption, cricket and tennis have received due attention, and a successful Sports Day was held as arranged. When this magazine is received, both Oxford and terminal examinations will be in full swing, and we shall all be looking forward to the leisure afforded by the summer holiday.

**School Register.****Valete.**

\*Jenkins, A. M. (VI.), 1929-39.      Goulbourne, E. (Upp. IVb), 1934-39.  
 Harris, B. M. (Low V), 1935-39.      Jordan, A. W. (Upp. IVb), 1933-39.  
 Findon, J. A. (Upp. IVa), 1936-39.      Walton, E. M. (III), 1938-39.  
 Dyer, N. H. (Upp. IVb), 1936-39.

\* Prefect.

**Salvete.**

Dew, E. J. (Low V.).      Orrell, J. R. (III).  
 Haines, L. E. (I).      Ward, C. N. (III).  
 Moizer, J. D. (Rem.).

There have been 205 pupils in attendance this term.

**Old Scholars' Guild News.**

PRESIDENT—Mr. C. T. L. Caton.

In May last the Guild completed the twenty-first year of its existence, and arrangements are well in hand to celebrate the attainment of its majority at the Summer Reunion, which is being held on Saturday, July 29th. Mr. and Mrs. Wells have signified their intention to be present, and we feel sure that very many Old Scholars will wish to attend to meet them. A printed list of those who have already accepted the invitation accompanies this magazine.

The annual Cricket match with the School XI will begin at 3 o'clock, while an American Tennis tournament will run from 2.30. A buffet tea will be served in the dining room between 4.30 and 5.30. At 7.30 a variety concert, with Old Scholars as artistes, will be given in the Art Room. At 9.0 a special Birthday supper will be served, followed by the business meeting. Later, dancing will take place until midnight. In the event of the day being wet, the Reunion will begin with a sit-down tea at 4.30.

We would remind Old Scholars that it is at the Summer Re-union that the election of new officers and committee takes place. This year it will be necessary to choose, at least, a new secretary and six committee members, consequent upon retirements and resignations. No nominations have so far been received.

In a Football match with the School XI on Saturday, April 1st, an Old Scholars team won by seven goals to two. The team was L. Baylis; N. Green, D. Baylis; P. Smith, R. C. Baylis, W. Savage; E. Spiers, R. Biddle, A. Avery, P. Wheeler, A. Baylis.

A Tennis match took place on Friday, June 2nd, between an Old Scholars team and the School. The Old Scholars won by six matches to three, being represented by Molly Bomford and E. Lewis; E. Holder and R. Bunting; M. Sisam and Marjory Bomford.

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We are pleased to record the progress in the musical world of Vera Wood (scholar 1926-32), who has recently joined the Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company. Old Scholars will be interested to read of some of her experiences, which she relates in an article in another part of this issue.

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Congratulations to H. E. Yates (scholar 1927-33) who has passed the Final examination of the Solicitors' Law Society, and is now a Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Judicature.

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A short broadcast talk on "Land Subsidence and Salt Marshes" was given by Dr. V. J. Chapman (scholar 1918-23) in the National Programme on Wednesday, June 28th.

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We learn with pleasure of the appointment of R. V. Wright (scholar 1926-31) as Cookery demonstrator for the North Somerset Electric Company.

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Congratulations to Harold Mander (scholar 1916-23) on his appointment as headmaster of Halesowen Grammar School.

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And to Mary Roberts (scholar 1933-37) on her success in the recent Civil Service Typists Examination. Out of eight hundred successful candidates she was placed fourteenth.

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### **Births.**

On April 25th, to Mr. and Mrs. E. Broadley (née Ivy Dowdeswell)—a son.

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On April 27th, to Mr. and Mrs. P. L. Lee (née Eunice Baseley)—a son.

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On April 26th, to Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Hodgkinson—a daughter.

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On April 29th, to Mr. and Mrs. J. Harwood—a daughter.

### **Marriages.**

On April 10th, at Astwood Bank, Samuel Bowen (scholar 1921-23) to Mary Lucy Hollington.

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On April 10th, at Alcester, Howard Benjamin Lane to Alice Mary Bryan (scholar 1925-29).

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On April 25th, at Coughton, Harold John Smith to Doreen Eleanor Horton (scholar 1926-30).

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On May 20th, at Rugby, Joseph Kenneth Stanley Baylis (scholar 1920-23) to Margery M. Simpson.

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On May 29th, at Temple Grafton, Clifford Henry Baylis (scholar 1926-34) to Phyllis Mary Clark (scholar 1927-32).

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On June 30th, at Bidford-on-Avon, Kenneth B. Ll. Bailey (scholar 1928-34) to Patricia M. Boshier (scholar 1927-31).

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### **Deaths.**

On May 15th, at Nottingham, Francis John Masters (scholar 1925-29), aged 26 years.

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On June 11th, at Temple Grafton, Robert William Clark (scholar 1927-31) aged 23 years.

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### **Words and Music.**

It doesn't seem very long since I too, piloted my bicycle into the cycle shed and wended my way, sometimes half-heartedly, sometimes cheerfully—it all depended upon whether I'd done my algebra homework or not—to the cloakroom. But this isn't an article on 'Retrospect' or anything clever and elusive like that, for I'm an alien, and have wandered from the straight and narrow orthodox path into a rabbit warren-like world of music, and having done so, I'm asked to tell you a little about it.

I went to the Royal College of Music to study voice production—and for the benefit of those people who exclaim incredulously 'Good gracious, do you sing all day?' let me explain right away that the chief subject or first study, which one

studies, whether it be piano, flute, violin, clarinet, orchestration or merely the triangle—is but a peg on which to hang all the other supplementary subjects. In my first year my syllabus consisted of voice production, pianoforte, harmony and counterpoints, aural training, sight reading, history of music, appreciation of music, ensemble singing, choral singing and conducting. Later I augmented this with opera, dramatic art, diction, gesture, ballet, fencing and stagecraft.

In all subjects—students are in two groups, those studying with the final goal in view of teaching or those who wish to be performers—I belonged to the latter category and in consequence took every opportunity which came my way of singing to an audience. In addition to outside work there were the College concerts which are open to the general public. The College orchestra is conducted by one or other of the well known conductors such as Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Adrian Boult, Dr. Sargent or Mr. Constant Lambert—criticisms of which appear in the leading London papers, invaluable, indisputable records of work done. Operas and plays were produced in our own theatre which had all the facilities and equipment of a normal theatre.

Neither did we work all the time; there was a Sports and Social Club and we had cricket, rugby, tennis, soccer and fencing matches, not to mention darts—just like any other college.

I so well remember my first professional engagement—I was asked to be the contralto soloist in a performance of Bach's St. Matthew Passion, at Charterhouse Boys School, in Surrey. This occurred in my second term at College, I was nearly sick with excitement. The fact that I'd never sung with an orchestra before coupled with the fact that the tenor was the Stewart Wilson of the Albert and Queen's Hall fame was nearly too much for me. Looking back on that March Sunday in the lovely Chapel with such magnificent acoustic properties, I can well imagine that I sang with more feeling than technique and more exuberance than poise and musical judgment. Despite its faults, it was a red letter day and I was so thrilled to be surrounded by a crowd of Carthusians eager for my scrawled autograph on their dog-eared copies of Bach's noble work—the first time to be autograph hunted. The last time it occurred was a short while ago outside the Theatre Royal, Newcastle. Half a dozen small boys thrust stubby pencils and books upon me saying, 'Autograph mine first miss, and put something else besides *and* a photograph.' Having explained that I hadn't any of the latter on me, one bright laddie solved the situation thus, 'I'll give you my name and address miss and, then you can send me one—Ah do!'

There are so many things I'd love to tell you of those blissfully happy years at College, but I must be content with dipping here and there into the last five years. One little incident in connection with my first job. A little envelope was handed to the performers before the commencement of the performance—I knew what it contained—my first cheque. I saw Stewart Wilson slip his into his pocket with the airy nonchalance of twenty-five years' experience. I fingered my envelope amazed at being paid for doing something I loved with all my heart and soul. Half ashamed I looked up to see Mr. Wilson eyeing me with amusement written all over his face. With a cold glance I tried in vain to slip the precious envelope into my handbag with that certain air.

My first debut at the Queen's Hall, was in Berlioz's 'Childhood of Christ,' conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent with the Royal Choral Society and the London Philharmonic. I was a hidden 'angel' watching Dr.'s beat behind a curtain, heart beating fast lest I should miss the beat and bungle my precious solo altogether. There was a harmonium accompanying me, also behind the curtain—at a crucial moment it developed an uncanny sound resembling the laboured breathing of an asthmatical patient.

There were the times, when I have worked at college all day—sang solos at a West End Masonic Dinner at night, and then kept myself awake somehow until 2, 3 or 4 in the morning in order to Broadcast to the Empire from the Maida Vale Studios.

And the exciting occasion when I was asked to sing at a West End 'At Home' at which Her Majesty Queen Mary was to be present. Just as I was about to enter the large room to perform, I looked at my hands, no white kid gloves—in my excitement I had left them at home; there was a moment of panic in my mind which was instantly dispelled when a kind lady peeled off her own impeccable gloves and handed them to me. I sang my group of solos and came back to the ante-room, a step sounded behind me and there was the Queen's Secretary—'Her Majesty wishes to speak to you.'

I followed with beating heart, but feeling—oh so proud and yet—oh so humble. Queen Mary bolt upright in a chair—the familiar toque—right hand resting on the knob of her parasol—I curtsied. From the first moment she put me at my ease and asked me about my studies, my home and what I was going to do. A red letter day again.

When I left Queen Alexandra's House, which was a lovely hostel for students and which had sound proof studies for practising—I came to the flatlet in Queen's Gate Terrace, which is still my London address. At first I wondered how I was going to manage about practising—practising at the best of times

is a misery for the unfortunate person who is within earshot, but vocal practising is, I think, worse than anything. However, nothing occurred until one day, the maid came in with a great clatter of dust pan and brush and said—‘Lawks! Mr. Marlowe’s in a way this morning—pacing up and down, he is for all the world like a lion in a cage.’

Mr. Gabriel Marlowe I must explain was the occupant of the flat next door to mine; he is a novelist and also scenario writer to Conrad Viedt, the well known actor.

‘Oh dear,’ I said. ‘My practising is disturbing him.’

‘It’s not you so much,’ sniffed Florence the maid. ‘It’s the young lady down below.’

‘Two people trying to sing in one house is a bit too much,’ I reflected—‘I’ll do a spot of piano practising.’

I was half way through the Mozart Sonata in ‘A’ major, when there came a tap on the door.

‘Now I’m for it,’ I thought, ‘He’s going to complain.’

I opened the door and framed there, stood the largest person I’ve ever seen, a terrific blue dressing gown taking the place of his lounge suit jacket. He bowed in that delightful continental style. ‘Good morning—please pardon the intrusion, but I know zat zonata from the A to the Z, and you have zee time a little wrong, allow me,’ and he swept me on one side, sat down at my piano and played the work from beginning to end, from memory. I felt squashed, battered, whipped off the field—and not a single complaint about the row I made at very frequent periods.

He bowed again as he made his way to the door, and with a charming smile said—‘I like your voice—sometime I will hear you; now I must fry fish’—and he went.

‘Fry fish?’ I thought, ‘Fry fish?’ Ah, I have it—he has other fish to fry.’

A quaint character.

There was the occasion when I played Lady Teazle in a College production of ‘The School for Scandal.’ The next day two gentlemen came and made inquiries about me. They were film representatives who wished to give me a screen test. I went to Denham for the experience of going, and was very thrilled indeed when I was offered a contract, but—and don’t raise your eyebrows—I didn’t accept. Ambition is a curious thing. My ambition lay in another direction.



Later a grand opportunity came. I was playing a part in a Pantomime last Christmas, when the producer, Mr. Kingsley Lark asked me when I was going into Grand Opera. Mr. Lark is Stage Director for the Royal Carl Rosa Opera Co., of which I am now a member. It was quite unsought. I was leaning against a flat in the wings on the opening night. Mr. Lark came up and said : ' When are you going to sing in Opera ? '

Completely dazed I ejaculated ' Me ? ' And he said : ' When this run is over, I want you in the Carl Rosa ! '

And that's just a little bit about the life of

V. W.

### July 1959

Friends, fellow sufferers, lend me your ears ;  
 I come to call on Virgil, not to praise him.  
 The evil that he did lives after him ;  
 And we are left to struggle through his verse  
 Seeming to enjoy it. Our learned master  
 Hath told us it is past all praising—  
 But as we struggle on our weary way  
 Mixing up *vir* and *vis* and other nouns,  
 We wonder if such man could ever be,  
 Who could enjoy to put down all his thoughts  
 In Latin. How we wish he'd thought of us  
 Struggling to pass examinations,  
 And with kind heart had made the meaning plain  
 And had not used so many different tenses.  
 O Virgil ! May thy ghost remember us  
 And as we sit before our Latin paper,  
 Whisper correct translations in our ears.  
 O adverbs ! thou art flown from out our minds  
 And we have lost our reason, O help us !  
 O ! in our time of need remember us,  
 Who art the master of the Latin tongue ;  
 Make clear the meanings of the prepositions  
 Which now are dancing 'fore our frightened eyes  
 On that green paper. May thy pitying soul  
 Whisper the ablative of *res*, perfect of *do*,  
 The meaning of *tueor* which we have,  
 As all our noble ancestors, forgot.  
 O whisper ! that our weary brains may write  
 A worthy rendering of thy polished verse,  
 That he who marks our efforts may not sigh  
 And with a crimson pencil draw a line  
 Through sheets which bear the hopeful name of Latin !  
 O pity us in this our great despair—  
 Alas ! ten minutes more and we must give them in.  
 O stop the clock ! O make this passage plain !  
 O tell us, for thy sake, what *tamquam* means,  
 The genitives of *ipse*, *os* and *pax*—!  
 The time advances, wilt thou help us yet ?  
 The verbs and nouns have vanished from our minds  
 And we must pause 'til they come back again.

D. J. H.

### Oxford Letter.

Dear Editor,

For most people anticipation is inwardly more intensely exciting than participation in an actual event: the free play of imagination, unfettered by facts, tends to give to the future an unreal vividness which fades rapidly once the present merges into the past. But practically everything that can be imagined or dreamt about Oxford would find some counterpart in reality: queer ideas and thoughts, eccentric people and strange habits are the common features of everyday life. No one raises his eyebrows at the supremest achievement of idiocy. If one is a little queer oneself, there is bound to be someone else in Oxford a little queerer.

That, I think, is one of the first impressions one gets of Oxford. It is a place where the extraordinary becomes the ordinary. Although to the average Alcestrian a Fascist with sleek black hair and dastardly doctrines is not unknown, a black sheep perhaps in the midst of a flock of more benevolent, more placid lambs, nevertheless the Communist is a red herring, a monster with blood-red revolution up his sleeve. But Oxford reveals him as a mild man, blinking through spectacles upon his fellow beings, sadly and reflectively; he is a mere pipe-smoking, armchair-reformer who talks his death-doing propaganda over an afternoon cup of tea. But see him in the Town Hall with eyes intent, body rigid and mind enthralled by the fiery eloquence of Gallacher, the Communist M.P.; then is the man transformed: he stamps, he shouts, he applauds vociferously; he vents his wrath on the very name of Neville Chamberlain; Russia is his picture of Heaven. But his disease is infectious; the old die-hard Tory complacently arrives at Oxford thinking everything is rosy and England safe under her auspicious leaders. But before the first week is out he begins to develop spots, generally of a red nature; he becomes addicted to neurasthenia and dejectedly becomes convinced that he is on the downward path to destruction. A fiery fellow with a pile of Labour-club cards darts in and ends his spell of mental torture. A few days pass and you see him furtively slinking round to that same fiery fellow's rooms, there to imbibe the glorious gospel of Marx over an evening cup of coffee.

But enough of these political reflections. I hope I have given you an idea of the dangers that beset the path of unwary freshers, who go to Oxford with a willingness to learn. I won't bore you with any details about attending lectures and study generally, but you may perhaps be interested in a few words about sport; you may know that a 'Blue' is almost as valuable and highly honoured as a 'First' and Oxford gives every after-

noon, or at least two hours of it, to physical exercises of one kind or another. A late Alcestrian, Mr. W. Sherwood, had sung the praises of rowing in my ears when at an impressive age and as it is an Oxford tradition, I thought it a glorious chance to use those muscles developed when doing the dickey-bird-hop, or was it the kangaroo-hop? at school. In a week, I learnt more bargee's language than I had picked up till that time, and every day my vocabulary widened: and every day, needless to say, I ate more and more and slept in comparison. But it's a he-man's sport with a vengeance. Picture yourself, one of eight men in a boat, on a roaring flood, sweeping at over ten miles an hour, six feet deep over hedges and fields with a driving blizzard tearing through you, and yours truly with a covering consisting of a pair of shorts, a cricket shirt, and a half-an-inch of snow, getting them down sharply and away. Dons and wise-heads smile benevolently in the smug comfort of an easy chair and say 'I could never bring myself to indulge in that brutish sport.' They little know the kick that can be got from such a battle with the elements.

Perhaps you have noticed, too, another characteristic of Oxford and Oxford undergraduates. They are very talkative on some subjects and say little about others. But please don't think that Politics and Sport are the only two occupations of so-called men-of-leisure. If you really knew how much and how little we do, you'd really be surprised.

So to all of those whose minds are green, best wishes from

Yours truly,

L. P.

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### *The Wind's Song.*

The wind in the tree-tops seems to say,  
'I'm out for fun and frolic to-day,  
Come playful leaves, oh, come along  
And join me in my merry song.'

The leaves join in the merry dance,  
They say, 'This is a lovely chance  
To lead the village in a dance;  
See! how the children love to prance.'

The wind who is full of mischief, sees  
A chance a woman's hat to seize,  
And down the street and away it goes,  
But where it's gone to nobody knows.

Still the wind keeps singing a merry song:  
'I'm out for frolic, so come along;  
Just follow me, then you can't go wrong,  
If you gaily dance and sing a song.'

L. GARNER (Upper IVa.).

### Notes and News.

The Sides captains are :— *Brownies*, E. Evans and Whitehouse ; *Jackals*, P. Horseman and Robinson ; *Tomtits*, D. Gale and Collins i.

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The captain of cricket is Butt.

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On Wednesday, March 29th, the Cross Country races were run over the usual courses. The senior event was won by Robinson, the junior by Collett ii.

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The Mile was run on Alcester Heath on Monday, April 3rd, the winner being Whitehouse.

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On Tuesday, April 4th, "Jubilee," a film produced to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the invention of the pneumatic tyre, and showing the rise and development of the Dunlop Company, was shown in the hall.

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At the closing assembly last term a number of presentations were made. The football for improvement (the gift of the Bunting Brothers) was presented to Biddle ; the hockey stick for improvement to B. Nall. Football colours were handed to Biddle, Webb, Booker and Collett i ; hockey colours to M. Winwood, D. Horseman, M. Nall, B. Slaughter, F. Hawkes, G. Miles and B. Harris.

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Before Easter, all stock was cleared from the old Stock room (which is now Miss Deans' room) and deposited temporarily in the Music room. Since then it has been transferred to the new Stock room, which adjoins the Art room.

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On Wednesday, May 3rd, the Upper Fifth, with Miss Deans and Mr. Druller, attended a performance of 'Twelfth Night' at Stratford-on-Avon.

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The French orals, in connection with the Oxford School Certificate examinations, were held at school on Monday, May 8th.

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On Wednesday, May 10th, a large party consisting of the Sixth and Upper IV A. and B. with Miss Deans, Miss Powell and Mr. Druller, visited the Memorial Theatre to see 'Richard III.'

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Sports Day was Thursday, May 25th.

From the sale of Arts and Crafts entries on that day a sum of £3 14s. 1d. was realised.

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The Scouts' outing took place on Friday, May 26th, a visit being paid to Symonds Yat.

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Half term and Whitsuntide holidays were taken on Monday and Tuesday, May 29th and 30th.

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Cricket caps have been presented to Collins i, Horton, Walton and Woods.

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Congratulations to Wilkes i, who has been awarded an Exhibition at Denstone College.

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The Oxford Higher School Certificate examinations began on Thursday, July 6th, and the School Certificate examinations on July 13th.

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The school photograph was taken on Thursday, June 29th.

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Term ends on Friday, July 28th.

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We learn with pleasure of the birth of a daughter on June 9th, in Germany, to Mrs. F. K. Reiners, who, as Miss Taylor, was a member of the Staff from 1921 to 1923.

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In the final of the Tennis Gold Medal tournament, played on Wednesday, July 5th, D. Horseman beat M. Williams 6—2, 6—0.

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We wish to express our thanks to Miss E. K. Jones for the gift of books—twenty-one in all—to the school library.

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Attendance at the Redditch Swimming Baths has been made compulsory this term for all scholars down to and including the Upper Fourth forms, unless excused for medical reasons. It was intended that boys and girls should attend alternately on Wednesday afternoons, but, owing to the absence of Mrs. Adams, this arrangement has not been possible, and the boys, accompanied by Mr. Walker, have so far had rather more opportunity of developing this essential and interesting side of their Physical education.

### **A Cheery Old Man.**

With great relief I staggered into the park. I was loaded up with parcels, and I was also dreadfully fatigued from visiting one of those spring sales some women seem to take pleasure in. I thought myself lucky, for I sighted the one and only vacant seat in this crowded city park. As I walked towards it so did a ragged old tramp from the opposite direction. I have a faint dislike of tramps, but this one did not look too bad. As I neared the seat he raised his battered cap and said, 'Nice day, ain't it, miss? Won't yer 'ave a seat?' I thanked him, and sat. I happened to have a bag of cakes with me, and offered him one. He took it gratefully, but to my surprise, instead of eating it then and there, he put it carefully into his pocket. Noticing my questioning look, he said, 'No, miss, I never eats in parks wiv all these poah folks round.'

J. PLESTERS (Lower IV).

### **London Letter.**

*The Editor,*

*The A. G. S. Record.*

Dear Sir,

When I received your request for a 'London Letter,' I thought, 'Ah, here at last is something that can be done with very little trouble to myself. Other people will supply the information, and all I shall have to do is write it down.' Alas, I was sadly disappointed in my hopes. The A.G.S. Old Scholars in London were singularly loth to give an account of their activities, whether through shame or modesty I do not know. I went first of all to see Gertrude Stone at the Froebel Institute, at Roehampton. When I asked her what she had been doing she replied, 'Oh, the usual things—work, teaching practice—you know. Come and see Jeremy.' Not to be put off by this invitation to visit the college rabbit, I continued to worry her for details, and eventually she promised to write to me later on.

Her letter arrived after at least three more demands for it. She has been spending some of her time sightseeing—she found a visit to the Houses of Parliament very interesting, but says: 'I wish I could remember a little more history, though.' She has also managed to go to Westminster Abbey after two unsuccessful attempts. Two visits to Kew Gardens in lilac time resulted in the destruction of beliefs cherished from childhood—there was scarcely any lilac to be seen. Last term she went to a social studies week-end in the east end, and also to some of the meetings of the Youth Parliament, both of which she enjoyed

very much. At the moment her main occupation is work—‘up to my eyes in it’—and, when not doing that, meeting or seeing off people at Paddington station, where she invariably arrives half-an-hour too early and passes the time looking at the other people who have done the same thing.

I came upon Margaret Rowles in the large Common room at Bedford College, and found her even more reluctant to tell me anything, except that she was working, had been working, and would be working, and so would I please not bother her any more. I said I found it very difficult to believe, with my knowledge of her school career (shades of free periods in the VIth!) that she could not spare me even five minutes from her work, and returned to the attack. Eventually she condescended to say that she had been boating quite a lot, and that she had given up her political activities as marching in demonstrations to Whitehall cost her too much in shoe leather. She then retired into a somewhat aggressive silence, as if in contradiction of the rumour that she has several times been heard yelling, ‘One, two ; one, two ;’ with vigour across the lake, with all the enthusiasm of a cox whose crew have not yet managed to tip her in.

Finally, I went to see Diana Hunt in her digs in one of the less respectable parts of Paddington. After climbing three flights of stairs, I found myself in a small room crowded with noisy people. I hastily retreated after promising to call again. ‘Oh, don’t be alarmed,’ said Diana, ‘they are all members of the Student Christian Movement and quite harmless.’ However, I decided that I might achieve my object better if I had her by herself, so arranged to meet her in Kensington Gardens. There she told me that a great deal of her time was taken up with S.C.M. activities, and also that she had been playing tennis. I asked whether it was true that she had once played cricket for the second XI, and she admitted that it was, but declined to tell me her score. She confessed that her political opinions had taken on a slightly pinker tinge since she had come to college, but denied any knowledge of the origin of a recent series of events including an explosion in the kitchens, a fire in the physics lab., and considerable trouble with the college drains. She said that it was true that they had one or two Irish Communists in their midst, but she did not think it likely that even they would do such things. ‘After all, we are one of the most respectable colleges in London, you know.’ She ended by expressing a hope that my account of the activities of the Old Alcestrians in London would not do too much to deter any readers from following in their footsteps, and with that hope I leave you,

Your London Correspondent.

### **An Earthworm.**

Into the chemistry lab. we bring,  
An earthworm to examine.  
To and fro crawls the slimy thing :  
Our plight you can imagine.

And then with ' meths ' the master comes :  
The worm he's going to kill.  
We look away as death benumbs  
The worm who caused no ill.

Next with magnifying glass  
The examination follows.  
Dozens of gleaming segments pass,  
Like ridges and tiny hollows.

It has no ears or eyes, we know,  
It's mouth is very wee ;  
And on its stomach bristles grow,  
Which through the glass we see.

Then we bear it, with solemn face,  
To its grave in the waste-box, hollow,  
A simple and a humble place,  
Where other worms will follow.

C. SANDERS (Lower V.).

### **Sports Day, 1939.**

Sports Day this year was preceded by a week of hot and sunny weather, and a day of almost tropical heat was anticipated. Fortunately, however, from the point of view of the competitors, the day turned out fine without being too hot.

The races were run with their wonted vigour and were again keenly contested. The spectators showed particular interest in the Slow Bicycle Race and also in the Obstacle Race, especially when one of the obstacles showed dangerous signs of collapsing. The Relay Race, this year won by the Tomtits, aroused great keenness and excitement among spectators and competitors alike.

Our thanks are again due to Mr. Hall for his unfailing energy and his expert organisation of the heats and races. We also thank the stewards, and judges for their assistance in awarding and recording points and for their contribution towards making Sports Day outdoors the success it was.

At the conclusion of the Sports and after the tea interval an effective gymnastic display was given by the girls of Lower V and Upper IVa, under the supervision of Mrs. Adams.

The trophies and medals were presented this year by Mrs. W. S. Howard, supported by Mr. W. S. Howard, Honorary Secretary of the Warwickshire Playing Fields Association.



The Sports Shield was again won by the Brownies. Whitehouse is to be congratulated upon winning the Victor Ludorum Sports Cup for the second time. He had a total of 63 points, while the runner up, Robinson, scored 51 points.

A vote of thanks was proposed to Mrs. W. S. Howard by Mrs. R. H. Spencer. A further proposition was made to the chairman and the proceedings closed with two verses of the School Song and the National Anthem.

The results of the events were as follows :—

#### SENIORS (over 14).

- 100 Yards.—1 Biddle, 2 Harrison, 3 Midlane i, 4 Collett i.  
 220 Yards.—1 Biddle, 2 Mahoney, 3 Webb, 4 Tie, between Houghton and Booker.  
 440 Yards.—1 Collett i, 2 Whitehouse, 3 Mahoney, 4 Robinson.  
 Half Mile.—1 Robinson, 2 Whitehouse, 3 Woods, 4 Walters.  
 Hurdles.—1 Collins i, 2 Whitehouse, 3 Booker, 4 Houghton.  
 Obstacle.—1 Robinson, 2 Webb, 3 Devey, 4 Houghton.  
 Slow Bicycle.—1 Cale, 2 Mahoney, 3 Collins i, 4 Arnold i.  
 High Jump.—1 Allen, 2 Whitehouse, 3 Collins i, 4 Midlane ii.  
 Cross Country (5 miles).—1 Robinson, 2 Walters, 3 Collett i, 4 Woods.  
 The Mile.—1 Whitehouse, 2 Collett i, 3 Goulbourne, 4 Robinson.  
 Long Jump.—1 Webb, 2 Whitehouse, 3 Biddle, 4 Midlane i.  
 Throwing the Cricket Ball.—1 Biddle, 2 Whitehouse, 3 Collett i, 4 Woods.  
 Consolation Race.—1 Hunt i, 2 Houghton, 3 Ison, 4 Devey.

#### JUNIORS (12 to 14).

- 100 Yards.—1 Richards, 2 Wilkes i, 3 Harris i, 4 Stewart.  
 220 Yards.—1 Sutor, 2 Collett ii, 3 Harris i, 4 Hunt ii.  
 Half Mile.—1 Smith, 2 Collett ii, 3 Rippington, 4 Brand.  
 Hurdles.—1 Collett ii, 2 Brand, 3 Wilkes i, 4 Singleton.  
 Obstacle.—1 Hunt ii, 2 Harris i, 3 Richards, 4 Collett ii.  
 Slow Bicycle.—1 Harris i, 2 Brand, 3 Arnold ii, 4 Wilkes i.  
 High Jump.—1 Brand, 2 Richards, 3 Collett ii, 4 Hunt ii.  
 Cross Country (3 miles).—1 Collett ii, 2 Rippington, 3 Smith, 4 Hunt ii.  
 Long Jump.—1 Collett ii, 2 Richards, 3 Brand, 4 Wilkes i.  
 Throwing the Cricket Ball.—1 Sutor, 2 Brand, 3 Hunt ii, 4 Collett ii.  
 Consolation Race.—1 Orrell, 2 Singleton, 3 Ore i, 4 Sharp.

#### JUNIORS (Under 12).

- 100 Yards.—1 Moizer, 2 Gittus, 3 Ore ii, 4 Hunt ii.  
 Egg-and-Spoon.—1 Burns, 2 Gittus, 3 Hillman, 4 Dybeck.  
 Sack.—1 Moizer, 2 Burns, 3 Warmington, 4 Budden.  
 Obstacle.—1 Moizer, 2 Aspinwall, 3 Ingram, 4 Warmington.  
 Three-legged.—1 Aspinwall and Dybeck, 2 Ore ii and Warmington, 3 Budden and Spooner, 4 Ingram and Gittus.

#### OTHER EVENTS.

- Skipping Race (Girls).—1 D. Harris, 2 B. Hill, 3 A. Villers, 4 S. Harrison.  
 75 Yards (9 and under).—1 Cassell, 2 Walsh, 3 Harris, 4 Gittus.  
 Tug-of-War.—1 Tomtits, 2 Brownies, 3 Jackals.  
 Relay Race.—1 Tomtits, 2 Brownies, 3 Jackals.

The following presentations were made :—

Victor Ludorum Sports Cup.—Whitehouse (63 points).

Silver Medals.—Smith, Collett ii, Brand, Collett i, Robinson, Biddle.

Bronze Medals.—Moizer, Harris i, Richards, Hunt ii, Wilkes i, Sutor, Rippington, Harrison, Allen, Webb, Houghton, Walters, Mahoney, Collins i.

Sports Shield.—1 Brownies (413 points), 2 Tomtits (300 points), 3 Jackals (223 points).

P. A. W.

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### **Sports Day Indoors.**

Ever since last year the pupils have been working towards one goal—the attainment of the shield by their side—and for the last week before the great day efforts were redoubled in an attempt to finish all articles. This culminated on the Wednesday evening in a grand climax—the practice of the art of cooking nobly borne by the mothers, those patient sufferers. The great day dawned fine and the attempts were carefully deposited in the dining room and were then transferred by the senior girls to the hall. Here ladies interested in the school kindly consented to judge the delicacies. At last, after a fierce battle for drawing pins, all the needlework and cookery were arranged.

In the afternoon visitors rapidly arrived and trade in the hall was brisk despite the fine weather. The demand for sweets far exceeded the supply. The needlework displayed at the side was greatly admired and attracted as much attention as the cooking ; the good quality and time spent were noticed particularly.

A representative collection of school art was arranged in the art room, consisting mainly of competitive work. The seniors contributed a large number of widely differing posters, some excellent pictures of scenes from nature and some delightful whitewood candle sticks with their accompanying match boxes. Paper appliqué work and potato cuts were exhibited by the juniors and attracted much attention. Historical dolls, models and woodwork articles were once more exhibited in the History room ; there were this year an unusual number of beautifully dressed dolls, memories of whom are to be preserved on a coloured film. Unfortunately the boys have had no access to the woodwork shop this year, and, in consequence, fewer articles were entered ; nevertheless the usual high standard was maintained in models of different media out of which were made a variety of ships, statues and buildings. Visitors found this room very interesting. In addition to these excellent displays parents of the very small were interested in their children's handwork, which was displayed in the preparatory department.

The dining room proved the greatest attraction to the pupils, for here they obtained tea. During the girls' gymnastic display the buildings were at last emptied. Then the trophies and medals were awarded to successful scholars by Mrs. Howard, who, supported by her husband, made a helpful speech. The school song and the National Anthem followed. Everyone then returned home from a happy day made successful owing to the strenuous efforts of staff and pupils. Many thanks are due to the judges and mistresses who all did their part to make the afternoon enjoyable for everyone.

The results are as follows :—

The Arts and Crafts Shield was once more won by the Brownies with 1,272 points (girls 999, boys 273); the Jackals were second with 1,158 points (girls 990, boys 168); the Tomtits third with 990 points (girls 828, boys 162).

The trophy was again won by D. Gale with 224 points.

Silver Medals—Seniors: J. Machin (141), M. Crompton (113), M. Jordan (110), D. Horseman (99), N. Green (99), D. Savage (87), E. Evans (80), P. Horseman (77), R. Stone (73), Walker (65). Juniors: M. Williams (135), M. Moizer (87).

Bronze Medals—Seniors: C. Stanley (63), G. Miles (60), S. Peel (53), B. Slaughter (49). Juniors: J. Plesters (57), F. Evans (55), Moizer (50), M. Goodall (49).

R. M. S.

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### Getting up one Cold Morning.

I woke uneasily, conscious that the wind was howling most unpleasantly and that I ought to get up and make a journey to town. I carefully raised myself on my elbow and looked out of the bedroom window. The view outside was not an inviting one; temptation whispered 'Have a few more minutes in bed,' so I stifled a few pang of conscience and lay down again. Once settled, even the thought of breakfast waiting downstairs failed to rouse me from my lethargy. I began to muse on the possibilities of feigning an illness so that I could spend the day in bed. However, as previous experience had taught me the futility of this ancient method of gaining sympathy, I abandoned the idea.

Meanwhile, sounds of furious activity downstairs assailed my ears. What could the rest of the family be doing? I ran to the top of the stairs and listened carefully for a few minutes. I deduced from the varied exclamations uttered that the cat and the canary had mysteriously disappeared. My conscience attacked me on the subject: well, perhaps I had left the cage-door open last night. Thinking that discretion was the better part of valour, I went back to bed to avoid being questioned on the matter.

Soon I felt delightfully at ease, so I closed my eyes languidly and began to dream. A series of breakfasts in bed rose up before my eyes ; an adoring family awaited my slightest command. This beautiful illusion was rudely shattered by a heavy hand, my father's, shaking me by my shoulder. My irate parent, it appeared, was not in the mood for listening to my excuses. He merely said that the rest of the family were going to town and I was left in charge for the day. The thought that there would be practically nothing to do in the house consoled me : anyhow, I had a good book to read.

As I entered the dining-room, I became conscious of a chilly atmosphere. An awful thought struck me—yes, the fire was out. My efforts to light another were none too successful ; driven in despair to the kitchen, I began to think of breakfast. Finding plenty of eggs in the larder, I decided to make an omelette. I kept strictly to a recipe in the cookery book, but somehow the omelette did not turn out properly and even the dog refused to eat it.

Somewhat discouraged by the ill success of my culinary efforts, I decided to return to the dining room and see how the fire was getting on. As it was not smoking too badly, I sat down in an armchair and began to moralize. These are the fruits of getting up late. I thought—no breakfast or fire. Perhaps there is something to be said for rising early, even on a cold morning.

MARY AUSTIN (Low V.)

### As Mad as a Hatter.

This description in verse,  
I will try to make terse—  
I failed to make mention  
The subject in question  
Is a creature quite queer,  
And I know that I fear  
I do not him flatter,  
He's mad as a hatter.

This creature of renown,  
With eyes so big and brown—  
Has soft ears so tall  
And a tail that is small,  
He is really a dear,  
But I know that I fear—  
It is a small matter—  
He's mad as a hatter.

His back forms an arch,  
He reminds me of March—  
His appearance I've stressed,  
Now his name have you guessed ?  
This creature so fair,  
Is the famous March hare,  
I know I don't flatter,  
He's mad as a hatter.

M. WILLIAMS (Lower V.).

### **Peeps at Rural England—1.**

There is no doubt that during the summer months the river is the thing. So let us be seasonable and take a walk across two fields and the railway line, being careful to avoid the numerous trains which rattle by at intervals throughout the day. If we have selected the right path, we shall meet the river at a shady bend marked by a clump of willows, and it is here that our interest is first aroused. We shall soon see that the steps cut here in the bank are of human making, and if we are really observant we may even notice a small platform of old boards and cycle tyres which has been recently erected. Clearly this is some sort of landing stage. Yes, for there are two posts at which the craft are moored. It is really more accurate to say 'is moored', for as we shall later learn, there are few who dare brave the perils of the river, and they share a single craft.

If our interest has been sufficiently aroused by what we have so far seen, we will see if we can perchance catch a glimpse of the three invincible musketeers—for it is indeed they—who dare to defy the wrath of nature in a small boat. Let us hide in those bushes there, for we can hear already the wire fence by the railway line creaking as under a great burden. Here they come, and here is the craft which bears them on their perilous adventures. A fourteen-foot canoe, painted a deep blue, and, if our friends' involuntary acrobatics be any true indication, a vessel of no small weight. They carry it down to the landing stage. A moment, and it is afloat, riding the water bravely. It is now that we notice the craft has but two seats, yet there are three boatmen. One will have to walk, that is obvious. They have decided who it is, and after removing an empty bottle and a lot of loose dandelion wine from the boat, they commence their journey. The vessel, we learn, is named *Mary Tudor II*. (This is not a strictly accurate statement, but everyone knows what she was called).

The vessel is now round the first corner, and the walker on the bank is some distance in front of her, occasionally calling out instructions regarding submerged logs. These, together with a certain impassable broken pear tree, form the chief bane of our canocists' lives. As they are now out of sight round the bend, it is fairly safe for us to follow them. We must, however, be exceedingly cautious, for if we approach too closely to them, we shall be asked in sarcastic tones 'do you want something? because we haven't got it.' How this river twists. The current round some of the bends is tremendous, and must take a deal of navigation. Suddenly we hear shouts, and we gather that the watcher on the bank has been neglecting his duty, to look for

moorhens eggs. He has a catapult in his hand and his pocket rattles as he walks, giving away the presence of a supply of ammunition ; it is obvious that his thoughts are not on submerged logs. Now, at last, they have reached the broken pear tree, and the boat is hauled out and carried through a hole in the hedge to the next field, where it is relaunched, and continues on its way. They are going faster now, and they soon reach the end of the navigable river, arriving at a mill. After this point, the river is too shallow to permit of navigation, so they turn back, and proceed upstream again.

This time, our friend with the catapult takes his position in the back seat, while another walks on the bank. A crowd of holiday makers crossing a field turn as one man to survey the craft with eager eye, and a loud voice from the middle of them calls out, shrilly 'Ooh ! dad, buy me one of them.' Abashed, the crowd continues on its way. It is now that we notice two things which have hitherto escaped our attention. One is that the man on the bank is holding a lead to which are attached two cairn terriers. The other is a rapid deterioration in the weather. A wind has sprung up, and is bringing from the south-west a solid bank of rain clouds. The sun is no longer shining, and it becomes rapidly darker and colder. It is soon raining hard ; let us take cover beneath these trees here. The canoeists also are taking cover. They have pulled into the bank and are removing from the back of the boat several old 'macs' and a cycling cape. These are distributed and donned, and then the three musketeers seek comfort in food. Paper bags are handed round, and we hear someone say, 'Well you can have it if you really want to, but it was brought for the dogs. Still, perhaps you include fishmeal biscuits in your diet.' The dogs are now in the boat on the knees of their unfortunate and long suffering master. We hear, if we are not tactfully deaf to such things, several muttered oaths as the dogs drop their biscuits in the bottom of the boat and insist on diving down after them.

At last tea is done, and as it is by now really pouring with rain, we will leave the river, and make a dash for it. The boat is already under way again, and, if we are not tactfully blind to these things, we may see three small clouds of smoke drifting over the river. . . . We are now out of sight of the river, though, and above the sound of our feet pounding on the damp earth we hear shouts in the distance. 'Darn you, kindly remember there are two ends to your paddle' . . . 'and two ends to the canoe' . . . 'and two banks to the river.' And so we take leave of

*Olla Podrida.*

A budding essayist talks about a 'weather profit.' Can this be the Umbrella Man?

Who made a cake for Sports Day and left it in the oven for an hour-and-a-half without turning the gas on?

A petition, says J.G., is something with which one divides a room in two.

'He snatched the veal from her face,' translates P.H.R. Surely he means the beefsteak.

Revelations of Science. R.T. has discovered that tadpoles have no stomachs.

'On entering the room,' writes K.A.W., 'the dartboard faces the door.'

R.M.M. informs us that the world is oblong.

What queer folks classical authors encountered! 'He stuck a dirty two-pronged fork in his own back and cut two slices from it,' translates C.S.

A fourth form genius reveals that hares have long ears so that they can listen to other hares.

Why are some of the boys so often found washing nowadays? Is it the lure of the liquid soap?

*Summer.*

Summer is the best of seasons,  
And for that there are many reasons.  
Flowers all colours are in bloom,  
Some in vases round the room.

Then the sea side gay and bright,  
Is a very pleasant sight.  
See the people on the beach,  
Right across the sands they reach.

If you count up all the things,  
That the lovely summer brings.  
I'm sure that you will all agree,  
That summer it should always be.

### Shopping.

The other day, Mother informed me that 'Now you are grown up, you must do my shopping for me,' and I readily assented not realising exactly what I had let myself in for. The following Saturday, feeling very proud because I was 'growing up,' I jumped out of bed, singing gaily, 'bagged' the bathroom, much to the annoyance of the rest of the family, and proceeded to prepare myself for the forthcoming ordeal. When I came out of the bathroom, I was greeted with many black looks, and such phrases as 'I shall be late for the office again. Why on earth can't you hurry up?' and 'H'm! Just like a girl.' But I sailed downstairs to my breakfast, which I had to eat before the others came down, because of catching the train to town.

I just managed to run on to the platform when the last passenger was getting into the train, and, shouting to the porter that I should 'get the ticket at the other end,' I scrambled in after her, and finished tying up my shoe-laces, which I did not have time to do at home. When the train puffed into its destination, I tried to jump off gracefully on to the very low platform, and succeeded in landing face downwards at the feet of a very important looking gentleman. I scrambled hastily to my feet again, and, feeling very hot and miserable, I muttered my apologies and hurried off to pay my fare.

At last I arrived at the busy part of the town, and here I discovered that I had lost my shopping list; so I dismally retraced my footsteps, searching for it. After having done this for what seemed to me hours, I remembered that I had put it in my pocket. I was then able to begin the most important part of my mission.

I was getting along very well, my purchases having been packed into a penny bag, when all of a sudden it started to rain, and I was wearing no coat. I was just going to run for shelter, when the bottom fell out of the bag, and tomatoes, and butter, and onions, and meat, and tooth paste all rolled along the street. Feeling very wretched, and very near to crying, and very wet, I picked up all the shopping and bought another bag, this time a twopenny one.

I walked briskly back to the station, and waited for my train to come. When at last I got home, Mother told me that I had taken last week's shopping list! Feeling therefore that I was not quite so 'grown up' as some people liked to pretend, I told Mother that if she did not mind, I would rather she did the shopping in future.

J. HANSELL (Lower V).



### **National Service.**

I had come up to town with the family for the week-end; we were looking after Aunt Mary's house, as she had gone down to Devon for a short holiday. We arrived at about half-past eight. It was a pitch black night, with rain drizzling miserably down window panes. We were all very glad to get inside. There was a roaring fire and a cosy supper all set out for us, evidently put there by Aunt's 'daily help.' Naturally we were all rather tired, and so we went to bed quite early.

My room was on the top of the house next to my brother Tom's. Having reached my room I got ready for bed as quickly as possible and was soon asleep. At about half-past ten I was awakened by a loud buzzing noise, which gradually grew softer and then increased again. Jumping out of bed I ran to the window and pulled aside the curtains. Immediately all the street lamps went out, and a loud and gruesome moaning floated up from below. Looking out I saw a white-capped figure floating across the street, and sounds of movement accompanied by loud shoutings, re-echoed through the street. It died away slowly, and then I saw a hooded man run up the road. After him raced more men, and then the first collapsed. The others surged over him, leaving him lying in the road; immediately white-capped figures came from the shadows and bearing him aloft carried him away. Silence reigned and as I drew the curtains round me in terror the lamps lit up, all was calm once more, and shivering I groped my way back to bed and was soon asleep again.

Next morning as we sat discussing the happenings of the night before, I heard the letter box open and snap together again. 'Go and see what it is, Betty' said Mother. I went to the door and picked up the leaflet on the floor; slowly walking back I read this:

'Thank you for putting your lights out for our A.R.P. Practice last night, you have helped in NATIONAL SERVICE.'

B. FRANCIS (Upper IVa.)

### **A Spot of Bother.**

I sat looking out of the railway carriage at the raindrops as they glistened on the interminable line of hedges intermixed with stations. 'Fleetwood! All change!' cried the porter and I hastily jumped up to get my suitcase down. Unfortunately those were the last words of English I was to hear for a little while.

At the school I was greeted with a 'Bonjour, Mademoiselle!' and a few more sentences which for the sake of my reputation in French spelling I had better not repeat—in short, I had

started on my French Course. For the first few weeks I nearly failed to get anything to eat or I would ask for the bread when I wanted the butter and vice versa, till at last in desperation I burst out 'Bread please!' Instantly every pair of eyes was turned on me and Madame whispered 'Parlez-vous en français s'il vous plait.' That night found me in bed with a dictionary and at the end of the second day I had nearly forgotten how to speak English.

The night before 'it' (I mean the awful thing) happened, we went to see a French concert which I thought very well acted, as that was about the only thing I understood. After that we had dancing to real good English dance records, which were a welcome change to the usual French jig. When I woke up in the morning 'it' had happened. One spot appeared, then another, and so on till I was nothing but spots. I was immediately isolated to a little room whose door rattled and from where you could hear the mournful cries of the seagulls on the cliffs. The doctor's verdict was, 'Fancy an English girl having German measles on a French course!' Here I was left fretting and fuming and wondering why I must be the one to have German measles. Suddenly a terrible idea struck me and I searched and searched for my railway ticket. Bus tickets and tram tickets enough to take me to Lands End, but no familiar 'Fleetwood to Alcester.' Then how relieved I was that I had German Measles and should have to go back in a car!

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J. MACHIN.

### Past and Present.

A certain village in this district is renowned for the queues of old men lounging on the bridge and gazing into the water, perhaps thinking of their younger days—the days when 'I started work at the age of eleven for sixpence a week,' as our grandfathers tell us, pointing at us with an aged finger and their faces betraying a slight look of contempt. They go on to say 'What's the good of education, I've had none and look at me now,' and then they put their thumbs into their waistcoats, at the same time displaying a gold watch chain.

Education was more or less confined to the three R's in their day, and even then the schoolmaster complete with cap and gown, had to administer a few swipes of the thin cane that he carried under his arm. Nowadays, education is just one mad cram. The young can be compared with Strasburger geese, but the duck food is replaced by two languages, History, Mathematics and Science, some branches [of the latter wandering off into the Greek alphabet. Then in the hottest month of the year, they have to pour all their knowledge on to paper in order to obtain

another piece of paper, which in some cases is carefully framed and handed down to posterity.

I wonder what the reaction of a Victorian mother would be if she saw her schoolgirl daughter suddenly come into her presence with her nails looking as though they had been dipped in blood, and cut to a point about three inches above the finger. I am sure that a brain specialist would have been called, either to the mother or to the daughter.

As the years go by, everyone seems to have gone to the extreme in all things. A girl thinks nothing of colouring her nails to match the dog lead and wearing plus-fours; while some men delights in having their hair permanently waved and their hands manicured. It seems as though the men and women are changing places. But the extreme to which some men have gone will soon be righted, for they have what our self-made grandfathers never had—compulsory Military Training.

P. H. R.

### *How I Earned a Shilling.*

As I got up one day last week, I saw the brilliant sunshine streaming through my windows. But that wasn't the only thing I saw; I noticed how the grass had grown. So I asked Father if I could mow it for him.

'What, you want to mow the lawn?' he asked, in evident surprise, 'Are you sure there is no catch in it.'

'Well, I did rather want to go to the pictures to-night.'

'If you do it well, I will pay for you.'

'Thank you, father.'

So I started. All went well for a few minutes, and then I noticed that the mower wasn't cutting the grass. After an examination of it, I found it wanted a clean, and so I took it to the garage. That wasted an hour! After several minor mishaps in getting it home, I started again. This time I was more successful, and I finished the mowing. Next came the job of taking the grass down to the rubbish-heap, and so I fetched the wheel-barrow, and loaded it with grass, and wheeled it down the garden. Half-way down, however, I tripped, upsetting the wheelbarrow, and the grass went everywhere. It took me half-an-hour to get it up, and then I was so fed up that I went into the house. When Father got home he asked me how I had got on, and I told him.

'Well,' he said, roaring with laughter, 'I think you well deserve a shilling!'

B. BAYLIS (Lower IV).

### *My Travelling Companion.*

I was seated in the train in Alcester station, waiting for it to start. The door of the carriage opened and a small strange-looking man in a bowler-hat and a morning suit got in. There was something unusual about him that made me feel rather awkward; something about him reminded me of a photograph which I had seen in the local paper of a man who had fallen out of a train on this line and had been killed. For weeks it had been everybody's subject for conversation, and the mystery of exactly how he met his death, whether by accident or not, was never solved.

The train moved out of the station in due course, and the little man sat staring out of the window. The more I looked at him, the more certain I was that he was the man of 'The Railway Mystery.' But, I argued, it was ridiculous that it could be he, for ghosts simply do not exist. So much for my experience up to that time. I began to feel distinctly uncomfortable about my travelling companion, and I hoped that perhaps he was only travelling to Coughton, or, at the worst Studley and that I might soon be rid of him. But that was not to be.

Every minute of our journey was carrying us nearer and nearer to the scene of the tragedy. Every minute my forehead was becoming wetter and wetter with sweat. I went hot and cold down my back, my hands shook, and I could hardly contain myself.

My fellow passenger got up and stood looking out of the window. I was in a frenzy. I tried to speak to him, but my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth, and I was speechless. 'At least' I thought, 'I will not see what he does,' and I buried myself behind my paper. The print stood out in large blotches and I could not read it. Every picture seemed to be of little men in bowler hats and morning suits.

At last, just as I was feeling that I could stand it no longer, I heard the door fly open, a loud cry, and the door slammed to again. This was more than I could bear, I closed my eyes and tried to recover myself.

To this day I do not believe that I dreamed it. I asked the porter on Alcester station whether he had seen the little man, and he declared that he had not, but if it was a dream, it was the most vivid dream that I have ever had.

### **The Scouts' Outing.**

The Scouts' Outing took place on May 26th, the day being spent in the Wye Valley. The party, consisting of about sixty scouts and Mr. Walker, Mr. Druller and Mr. Cook, left Alcester in two 'Midland Red' coaches at 8.15. The journey was very pleasant, although a few boys still felt the effects of the previous day. The weather played its part magnificently, even though one pessimist assured us that the mountains were accustomed to violent thunder storms.

Tewkesbury was reached after an uneventful journey, except for a moment's thrill, when the coaches passed the old army huts. Half-an-hour later, after visiting the Abbey and Woolworth's store, which to many had the greater attraction, we were again en route for Symonds Yat. For many, the latter part of this journey was very boring, but this was soon forgotten when at about twelve o'clock, the coaches drew up in front of a small jetty where half-a-dozen boats were moored. There was a rush for the boats, but after a heated argument with the owner about his prices, it was decided that they were too expensive.

A halt was made in the valley for lunch, of which we partook in a very rude manner: some were lying over the bank with their feet nearly in the river, others were racing about proclaiming that they had discovered some more boats, and were half choking in their excitement. After lunch, many hired these boats, but the more adventurous or the less wealthy part of the troop, wished to ascend to the 'Yat Pole' which we learnt was a thousand feet above sea level. A difficulty arose immediately. How were we to cross the river without paying for a ferry; many hailed the boys who had hired boats, but others in the end had to turn to the last resort and take the ferry.

The 'Yat Pole' was reached after a strenuous climb. On the summit one of our learned scholars revived the lecture on 'Parachuting and Gliding' that we had a few months ago. He stated that here were the ideal conditions, as he could even feel the current fashing his face when looking over the edge of the mountain. Then we continued along the ridge which was covered by woods. During our wanderings we saw a mad dog, which those who followed about half an hour later saw shot, much to their enjoyment. We also saw some enormous ants, which some of our party tried to exterminate, but the most interesting discovery was some caves. These were thoroughly explored by most of our party, while the rest, who were already exhausted by the distance they had climbed, rested on the ledge below.

After descending the mountain and getting picked up by various boats, which were passing, we spent the remaining time before tea on the river. At this period I think, we experienced the most eventful time during our stay at Symonds Yat. On one occasion our amateur oarsman nearly overturned the boat in an endeavour to rescue his oar. Just then much to my friend's relief the whistle was sounded for tea and all thoughts of what might have been a wreck were lost. After tea the troop made its way back to the coaches, tired but happy.

The return journey began at about five o'clock; again a halt was made, but this time at Malvern, at the British Camp. After having climbed one of the hills, we made our way slowly back to the coaches, with the exception of one boy who preferred to descend head-first.

As the coaches drew nearer Alcester, some of us who had dropped out of the singing through loss of voice, were regretfully thinking that our last Scouts' Outing had passed. At eight o'clock we arrived back in Alcester, tired but certainly happy. Everyone was too tired to give his personal views on the day, but I am sure that next year Symonds Yat will be the first place proposed for the Scouts' Outing.

R. M. M.

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### **A Strange Adventure.**

Two boys had just arrived at Beachy Bay; they were fourteen years of age. As they walked slowly along the beach, an old skipper who was seated on an upturned boat, stopped them, and said that there was an island not far from the mainland, which was supposed to be bewitched. The two fearless boys climbed into a nearby rowing boat, and started for the island.

When they reached the island they tied up the boat and set off for the ruined cottage. As they opened the door it creaked. It led into a low stone room. The walls were covered with cobwebs, the windows broken, but at the far side of the room was an open hearth, over which was hung a large black pot. The remainder of the cottage was in ruins. Between them the boys carried the pot back to the boat. They thought it would come in useful when they went camping.

The two boys clambered into the boat, but unluckily a thick mist had come over the water. However they had a compass. Their direction was North-east. The two boys kept on rowing for about an hour. Then the fog began to lift, and they saw a speed boat coming towards them in which were their Uncle and two other men. Uncle Jack asked the two boys where they

had been. When they said they had been to the island and had brought the old black pot with them, Uncle Jack said, "That is the reason you are going in the wrong direction: the pot has made the compass untrue." "It was a strange adventure," said Aunt Mary when they reached home tired out.

BARBARA NORTH (Lower IV).

### Football, 1958-1959.

Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goals.
16	5	0	11	50-80

The following boys represented the School:—Biddle, Booker, Collett i, Collins i, Edwards, Goulbourne, Green i, Heard, Horton, Houghton, Hunt i, Mahoney, Midlane i, Robinson, Smith i, Webb, Whitehouse, Woods.

### Tennis.

The team has been successful this season in two out of the three matches it has played. The first match was an away match against Evesham which Alcester managed to win by five matches to four, although Evesham won the more games. This happened also in the match against Redditch at Alcester. The Old Scholars proved superior to the School team, who lost by six matches to three, after a very enjoyable match. It is hoped that the team will be successful in their last match which is against Bromsgrove.

Steady improvement has been noted in the team this year, and it is hoped that this will be maintained. Unfortunately, Mrs. Adams has been ill for several weeks, and it is sincerely hoped that she will soon recover and return to school. Meanwhile, Miss Philips and Miss Powell have very generously given their time to arranging tennis practices and coaching the team.

The School has been represented by: B. Drew, D. Horseman, M. Crompton, M. Winwood, K. Pellman, C. Stanley and M. Nall.

D. J. H.

### Hockey, 1958-59.

Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goals	
				For	Against
7	0	2	5	12	34

## Cricket.

CAPTAIN—Butt.

We entered upon this season with optimism and so far our hopes have been justified. The bowling strength of the side and a good standard of fielding have been maintained while the batting has improved considerably, more aggression being displayed. A redeeming feature of the batting this season has been the power of recovery shown by the later batsmen after wickets had fallen cheaply.

The first match, against Evesham, resulted in a draw in our favour. Against Stratford—a strong batting side—the team excelled in bowling and fielding, but, batting under adverse conditions, a collapse set in. A narrow win against Bromsgrove, brought about by keen bowling was followed by a decisive victory against Warwick, the school topping the hundred. After a bad start against Evesham, in the return game, the later batsmen retrieved the position, and backed up by a keen attack the school went on to gain its third successive win.

In the return game with Stratford, the school turned the table in convincing style and gained an outstanding victory. This was indeed a historic occasion, as we had not defeated Stratford for seven years.

Results :—

	For	Against
A.G.S. v. Evesham P.H.G.S. (away), drawn,	64 for 7	64
v. Stratford K.E.G.S. (away), lost,	29	105
v. King's Norton S.S. (home), lost,	77	122 for 8
v. Bromsgrove C.H.S. (away), won,	68	59
v. Warwick School 2nd XI, (home), won,	128 for 9	89
v. Evesham P.H.G.S. (away), won,	102	63
v. Stratford K.E.G.S. (home), won,	97 for 6,	95
v. Redditch C.H.S. (away), lost,	44	45 for 8
v. Redditch C.H.S. (home), won,	79 for 9	75
		M. W. B.

## For the Juniors.

## The Farmyard.

As we passed the farm, a cheery old farmer came to the gate and asked us to have a look round the farm. At once we heard the grunting of pigs, the barking of dogs, the creaking of carts, the quacking of ducks, the clucking of chicks, the lowing of the cows, the baa-ing of sheep, and the turkeys gobbling. The horses were having a lovely game. We went inside the farmhouse, and the farmer's wife gave us a hearty welcome. She asked us to tea and also to stay the weekend. We did not want to leave at all.

R. FRENCH (Remove).



**Summer.**

Summer's here,  
The really best part of the year.  
You go to the sea  
With fun and glee.  
You play in the sand,  
While you listen to the band.  
I'm sure summer's here.

B. HILL (Form II).

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**A Rhyme.**

The people of the olden days  
Acted parts of mummer's plays.  
The plays were based upon a rhyme,  
Or upon a midnight crime.

J. GITTUS (Form II).

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**Teena.**

Once upon a time there was a pixie and a gnome. They were very mischievous. One day they thought of playing a trick on the fairy, Teena. This was the trick. It was the fairy's party on Tuesday, and the pixie thought of putting a piece of rubber under Teena's plate, and they did it. When Teena came to eat her bread and nuts, the plate started to go up and down. She got up and frowned at them, ran out of the palace, got a knife and cut off the pixie's head and the gnome's.

A. RUTTER (Form II).

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ALCESTER :  
THE CHRONICLE OFFICE,  
HIGH STREET.

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